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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (14 Jan 69) FOR OT UT 684110

17 January 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery, Period Ending 31 October 1968 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.
3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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FEB 10 1969

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 - 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1st BATTALION, 27th ARTILLERY
APO 96268

AVGE-TC

6 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CSFOR-65) R1 UIC: WD3EAA (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. (C) Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities.

a. Personnel.

(1) The 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery remains assigned to the 23d Artillery Group.

(2) Routine S1 activities were conducted during the period 1 August 1968 through 31 October 1968.

(3) The battalion was reorganized on 15 June 1968 under modified Table of Organization and Equipment 6-456E, USARPAC 1/68. The reorganization was directed by General Order Number 274, Headquarters United States Army Pacific, 29 May 1968. At the close of this report period the battalion strength is approximately 506 Officers, Warrant Officers and Enlisted men, a shortage of twenty eight. The average battalion strength during August, September and October was about ninety six per cent.

(4) At the close of the period the following critical personnel shortages existed:

| <u>GRADE</u> | <u>MOS</u> | <u>TITLE</u> | <u>NUMBER SHORT</u> |
|--------------|------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| SSG | 13B40 | Field Arty Crewman | 5 |
| SSG | 13E40 | Field Arty Opns and Intel Sgt | 7 |
| SGT | 13E40 | Field Arty Opns and Intel Asst | 6 |
| SP4 | 76S20 | Automotive Repair Parts Sp | 2 |
| SFC | 76Y40 | Unit Organizational Supply Sgt | 1 |

(5) Fifteen casualties were inflicted as a result of hostile fire. No personnel were killed in action during this period.

FOR OT UT
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6 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
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(6) The following awards were presented during the reporting period:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| (a) Bronze Star - Valor | 1 |
| (b) Bronze Star - Achievement | 1 |
| (c) Bronze Star - Service | 6 |
| (d) Army Commendation - Valor | 4 |
| (e) Army Commendation - Achievement | 2 |
| (f) Army Commendation | 6 |
| (g) Air Medal - Service | 3 |
| (h) Air Medal | 1 |
| (i) Purple Heart | 6 |

(7) The following recommendations for awards were forwarded and are pending action by approving authority:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| (a) Bronze Star - Valor | 4 |
| (b) Bronze Star - Achievement | 4 |
| (c) Bronze Star - Service | 6 |
| (d) Army Commendation - Valor | 2 |
| (e) Army Commendation - Achievement | 1 |
| (f) Army Commendation | 2 |
| (g) Air Medal - Service | 1 |
| (h) Purple Heart | 7 |

(8) There was no significant morale or disciplinary problems encountered during the report period.

(9) One hundred officers and enlisted men participated in the R&R program during the report period.

(10) There were no medical problems encountered which significantly affected the morale, strength or operational capability of the organization.

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(11) There were no vehicle or aircraft accidents significantly affecting operations during the period.

(12) Protestant and Catholic religious services continued to be offered weekly to all personnel.

c. Operations.

(1) The battalion continued normal operations consistent with the assigned mission during the reporting period.

(2) Elements of the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery participated in the following operations during the reporting period.

(a) The battalion continued participation in Operation Toan Thang, Phase II. Headquarters Battery continued as the Artillery Control for the Dau Tieng Base Camp Defense. As a result of the attack on Dau Tieng Base Camp on the morning of 4 July 1968, it was determined that the Fire Support Coordination Center (FSCC) established at the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery could not adequately control artillery fires during a simultaneous mortar/rocket and ground attack. This was due largely to the fact that the duty officer was single handedly carrying out several functions that should have been carried out simultaneously by other individuals. To improve the efficiency of operations, the responsibilities for these functions have been distributed to separate sections - countermortar section, target clearance and air warning section, base camp defense coordination section and command and control section. This arrangement provides for the rapid acquisition of targets and fire requests, speedy clearance of targets, the quick assignment of missions, effective control of fires, timely broadcast of artillery warning and overall supervision of the operation. The attached sheet shows the floor plan of the FSCC.

(b) A Battery, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery continued to support operations of the 25th Infantry Division in the Dau Tieng area. One platoon displaced to Bao Don area for approximately 15 days.

(c) B Battery, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery continued as general support, reinforcing, to the 25th Infantry Division Artillery. On 6 August 1968, B Battery moved from Duc Hoa to Fire Support Base Mead to furnish fire support along the MSR from Saigon to Tay Ninh. During the next 8 weeks B Battery displaced along the MSR to provide fire support where needed. On 25 September 1968, B Battery moved to Fire Support Base Bragg II to furnish fire support for the Tay Ninh area. From Bragg II the battery moved to FSB Rawlins III on 3 October 1968 then to Tay Ninh base camp from FSB Rawlins III on 12 October 1968, and has remained in this area for the remainder of the report period, except for four daytime displacements to support US and ARVN operations northwest of Tay Ninh.

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**SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CSFOR-65) UIC: WD3EAA (U)**

(d) C Battery 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery continued as general support, reinforcing, to the 1st Infantry Division, supporting operations around Phu Loi, until 10 October 1968. On 10 October 1968 the battery moved from Phu Loi to Cu Chi and became general support, reinforcing to the 25th Infantry Division Artillery. On 13 October 1968, C Battery displaced to Fire Support Base Rawlins III to provide fire support in the Tay Ninh - Dau Tieng area. It presently continues in this role.

(e) With completion of C Battery's move to FSB Rawlins III, the battalion established a continuous 155MM fire support belt extending from 2 KM east of the Cambodian border to 2 KM east of the Michelin Rubber Plantation and covering the MSR from Trang Bang to Tay Ninh to Dau Tieng.

(f) The following number of missions were fired with the total amounts of ammunition used below:

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>NUMBER OF MISSIONS FIRED</u> | <u>155MM AMMO EXPENDED</u> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Btry A | 3843 | 30,314 |
| Btry B | 1174 | 18,519 |
| Btry C | 2649 | 15,860 |

c. Training.

(1) The following periods of mandatory training were conducted during the reporting period:

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| (a) Command Information | 13 hours |
| (b) Character Guidance | 3 hours |
| (c) Survival, Evasion and Escape | 1 hour. |
| (d) Safety | 1 hour |
| (e) Drivers Training | 3 hours |
| (f) Civil Affairs | 1 hour |

(2) Four enlisted men attended the Special Weapons Assembly Course in South Korea 22 through 28 September 1968.

(3) Three enlisted men attended the Repair Parts Procedures course in Long Binh, 2 through 4 September 1968.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CSPOR-65) UIC: WD3EAA (U)

(4) In Country Replacement Training for newly assigned personnel of this battalion was being conducted by the 1st Infantry Division at the Division In Country Replacement Training Center in Phu Loi until it closed on 16 September 1968. Coordination has been effected to continue in Country Replacement Training at the 25th Infantry Division Replacement Training Center at Cu Chi as soon as relocated units of the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery are fully established there and can provide necessary administrative support.

d. Intelligence. The information of intelligence value for the battalion was obtained from the supported infantry elements, the 1st and 25th Military Intelligence Detachments, the US Advisors to the GVN districts, from Special Forces units such as those encamped at Minh Thanh and Tong Le Chan, and from Intsums received from higher headquarters. Additionally, valuable target information was gained from USAF Forward Air Controllers, Red Haze, People Sniffer and SLAR aircraft. The two TO&E authorized aerial observers assigned to the battalion provided approximately four hours of visual reconnaissance per day.

e. Logistics.

(1) Supply constantly improves.

(a) Class I has remained stable. Sufficient "A" rations have been drawn, although on occasion problems have arisen in getting these rations to troops located in the field due to the lack of air transportation. In most instances Fire Support Bases can be resupplied by convoy for which there has been no problems in resupply of "A" rations.

(b) No problems have been encountered in Class III.

(c) No significant problems have arisen in Class V.

(2) Maintenance support during the period has been satisfactory. However, many vehicles have been deadlined due to major assembly break down caused by excessive hours of operation under very adverse conditions. Maintenance problems have lessened with arrival of new M109 howitzers in late August. M548 Cargo Carriers continue to be a major source of maintenance problems. Transfers, transfer seals, and transmission failures account for the major portion of M548 deadlines.

f. Organization. None

g. Civil Affairs. During the reporting period the following civil affairs projects have been initiated, continued or completed:

(1) Ten MEDCAP visits were made during the period to the local village. A total of three hundred fifty patients were treated. Construction has begun on shower facilities and a new medical aid station. This will enable the medics

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6 November 1968

**SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CSPCR-65) UIC: WD32AA (U)**

to perform daily MEDCAPS. Tooth brushes, tooth paste, soap, etc, are being presently distributed to the villagers and daily instruction on proper body care is given by the medical personnel of this unit.

(2) Two parties are being scheduled for Vietnamese laborers working for Headquarters Battery 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery - one party on Thanksgiving Day 28 November 1968, and one party for the laborers and their families on Christmas Day 25 December 1968. Both parties will be held in the Headquarters Battery location.

(3) Members of Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery have submitted letters to their families and charitable organizations requesting canned goods and clothing. These items will be distributed to the Vietnamese laborers and their families during the Christmas Party.

(4) Boy scout activities continued during this reporting period. Several five boy scout uniforms were distributed to participating members of the Dau Tieng troop. Plans to incorporate sports activities and food distribution to the less fortunate villagers of Dau Tieng are now under way. These projects are being accomplished through the cooperation of the District Chief and religious leaders in Dau Tieng.

2. (U) Section II. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel. None

b. Operations.

(1) Manual Operations During Firing Missions.

(a) **OBSERVATION:** Continuous power operation of the Howitzer, 3F, M109 during firing missions causes considerable wear and tear on the power system causing operational failures.

(b) **EVALUATION:** It is not necessary to use power operations on all missions. Missions that do not require rapid response and do not require traversing more than 1800 mils can effectively be fired without power. Max use of the manual traverse and elevation mechanisms will increase the life of power components.

(2) Field Ammunition Storage.

(a) **OBSERVATION:** The proper storage of ammunition in the field is a constant problem.

(b) **EVALUATION:** The desirable structure is one which provides several types, adequate storage space and protective covering, yet can be quickly

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
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and easily emplaced and march ordered. It has been found that a structure of culvert pieces covered with sandbags meets these requirements quite satisfactorily. The culvert pieces are stacked in pyramid fashion and the entire pyramid is covered with sandbags. Each piece of culvert serves as a separate storage space for each ammunition type.

(3) Panoramic Telescope Malfunctions Due to Moisture.

(a) OBSERVATION: A panoramic sight on a howitzer from another battalion, but firing under our control, malfunctioned causing a firing error that resulted in friendly casualties.

(b) EVALUATION: Thorough investigation disclosed that the deflection mil counter had become corroded to such an extent that it would not rotate. The corrosion was apparently caused by excessive moisture in the sight. The gunner's aid counter rotated when the mil counter failed to turn. The gunner did not check the gunner's aid counter prior to firing the round. This check is not prescribed by FM 6-94. Had the gunner checked the gunner's aid counter, he would have discovered the faulty counter. The gunner's aid counter should be checked before firing each round. The established method for preventing corrosion due to moisture is the periodic purging of the sight. At present this can be accomplished only by support maintenance personnel. On site purging is normally impractical since units are displaced away from support maintenance and are not readily accessible. In addition, a single maintenance activity supports numerous firing batteries. It is also quite difficult for units to make frequent trips to support maintenance in order to have their sights purged. In addition, the weapon is rendered nonoperational during the time the sight is removed for purging unless a float is available. The purging of a sight is a simple operation that can easily be accomplished by organization personnel. The necessary purging equipment is minimal and can easily be maintained at the organization.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That FM 6-94 be changed to include checking of the gunner's aid counter before each round is fired. That purging and purging equipment be authorized at the organizational level.

c. Training. Aerial Observers.

(1) OBSERVATION. Additional training of aerial observers appears to be needed in the proper techniques of aerial observation and visual reconnaissance.

(2) EVALUATION. In CONUS, training is received by artillery officers in the procedures of artillery adjustment from the air, but only a brief mention seems to be made to visual reconnaissance. As far as is known, no training program for VR is presented in Vietnam, except at unit level, which may not always be completely adequate.

6 November 1968

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Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CSFOR) UIC: WD3EAA (U)

(3) RECOMMENDATION. That additional training be instituted either in CONUS or a Field Force level in the proper techniques of VR.

d. Intelligence. Concealment of Direction of Scan of Q-4 Radar.

(1) OBSERVATION. It was noted that on numerous occasions mortar/rocket attacks were initiated while the Q-4 radar was pointed in a direction other than that of the attack.

(2) EVALUATION. It appears that the enemy is cognizant of the limited sector of scan of the Q-4 radar and launches many of their attacks while the radar is pointed in another direction. The problem of denying the enemy knowledge of the direction of scan of the radar was satisfactorily solved by correcting four uprights on the radar platform that extend above the top of the antenna and draping a parachute over the uprights and antenna. There appears to be no degradation in radar capabilities when this expedient is used.

(3) RECOMMENDATION: None.

e. Logistics:

(1) Air-cooled Generators in the Vietnam Climate.

(a) OBSERVATION. This battalion has experienced a higher than normal deadline rate and early wear out time on air-cooled generators.

(b) EVALUATION. Although the air-cooled generators receive constant care, they continue to have a higher than normal deadline rate. This could be attributed to the intense heat and high humidity which greatly reduces efficiency of an air-cooled system. The results of a degradation of the efficiency of an air-cooled system are higher running temperature and increased wear. It is possible that water-cooled systems might be more effective in this climate.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: None.

(2) Non-availability of High Mortality Major Assemblies for Carrier, Cargo, M548 and Truck, 5 ton M54A2.

(a) OBSERVATION. During recent field and routine operations, the M548 Cargo Carrier has still proved to be a weak vehicle, while the 5 ton trucks are becoming aged, with excessive down time. Much of this down time may be attributed to a shortage of major assemblies to repair the vehicle.

(b) EVALUATION. Since the M548 Cargo Carrier and the M54A2 five ton trucks have considerable down time, major assemblies for these particular vehicles should be stocked in larger quantities.

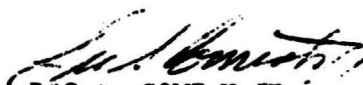
6 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CsFOR-65) UIC: 1D3111 (U)

(c) **RECOMMENDATION.** Recommend that DSU review the number of major assemblies which have had to be placed in M548 Cargo Carrier and M54A2 five ton trucks and stock a larger quantity of these assemblies for combat essential vehicles.

(d) **Organization.** None.

1 Incl


LEO S. COMISH JR.
LTC, Artillery
Commanding

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- 3 Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam
- 1 Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam, Artillery
- 6 Commanding Officer, 23d Artillery Group

AVOCL-C (5 November 1968) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery for Period Ending 31 October 1968, (HQT-OSFOR-65)(21) UIC: WD3EAM (U)

Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group, APO 96269, 21 November 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery, ATTN: AFEB-11C, APO 96266

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report for the period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference Section 2, paragraph 2b(3): Concur. Due to the damp climate in Vietnam, condensation in panoramic telescopes is a continual problem. Errors such as that cited in the referenced paragraph have been experienced. Frequent purging of the sights is necessary to maintain the sights dry and fully operational. To minimize downtime of panoramic telescopes it is felt that necessary purging equipment should be issued at Battalion level so as to insure ready availability of this equipment for use by organizational personnel when required. Further recommend that a change requiring a check of the setting on the gunner's aid counter prior to firing be incorporated into FM 6-94.

b. Reference Section 2, paragraph 2c: Concur. A primary source of gathering enemy intelligence is the visual reconnaissance program. Officers newly assigned to this command have had only a vague knowledge of this program. Greater dividends could be derived from visual reconnaissance if a training program were developed in CONUS at the Basic Course level to teach the techniques of visual reconnaissance to newly Commissioned Officers and to emphasize its importance and wide utilization in Vietnam.

c. Reference Section 2, paragraph 2d: The procedure for camouflaging the scan of the Q-4 radar cited in this paragraph appears highly successful. Recommend dissemination of this information to other headquarters as an acceptable field expedient.

Harold G. De Arment

HAROLD G. DE ARMENT
Colonel, Artillery
Commanding

Copy Furnished
HQ, 1st Bn, 27th Arty

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AVFB-FAC (6 Nov 68) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RC-CSFOR-65) (R1) UIC: 3D3LAA (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM ARTILLERY, APO 96266 8 DEC 1968

TO: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, ATTN: AVFEC-RE,
APO 96266

1. (U) The quarterly report of the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery adequately reflects the operations and lessons learned during the reporting period.
2. (U) Reference Section II, para 2b(3), Panoramic Telescope Malfunctions Due to Moisture. Nonconcur.

a. FM6-94 does not specifically instruct the gunner to check any of the readings on his sight before commanding "ready," and it is unnecessary that it do so. The duty of the gunner is to insure that the proper deflection is set on his sight and that his weapon is traversed to this deflection. Inherent in this responsibility is the requirement that he insure that the proper readings appear on his dials. This headquarters has no objections to this requirement being placed in the tables of FM6-94; however, it is felt that it is not imperative that this be accomplished and no directives changing crew drill procedures have been implemented.

b. The 29th General Support Group has expressed the view that the purging of sights should remain a third echelon maintenance responsibility. The operation is a fairly delicate one which, if not done by an experienced mechanic, can cause serious damage to the equipment.

c. The following actions have been taken to prevent recurrence of this problem:

(1) The 29th General Support Group has submitted an AIR recommending that the new counter assembly FSN 6680-907-0737 be replaced with the original, less sophisticated but more reliable counter assembly, FSN 6680-859-5986.

(2) All units having weapons mounted with the M115 telescope have been instructed to submit monthly a DA 2407 requesting ordnance inspection of the sights. 29th General Support Group is aware of the requirement and is prepared to comply with these requests.

3. (U) Reference Section II, para 2c, Aerial Observers. Concur with para 2b of 1st Indorsement.

4. (C) Reference Section II, para 2d, Concealment of Direction of Scan of Q-4 Radar. Concur with para 2c of 1st Indorsement. This procedure has been disseminated to the units of this command. In addition units having control of these radars have been encouraged to periodically relocate their equipment, leaving the camouflage covers in place as dummy sites.

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AVFB-FAC (6 Nov 68) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RC-CSTAR-65) (R1) UIC: WD3LAA (U)

5. (U) Reference Section II, para 2c(2), Non-availability of High Mortality Major Assemblies for Carrier, Cargo, M548 and Truck, 5 ton M54A2. Nonconcur. DBUs are taking appropriate steps to handle this problem. In the course of normal operations, usage factors are determined and stockage levels revised accordingly.

6. (U) Errors in the report have been corrected with pen and ink.


HENRY J. SCHROEDER JR.
Colonel, Artillery
Commanding

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AVFBC-RE-H (6 Nov 68) 3rd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 27th
Artillery Period Ending 31 October 1968 (RCS-CSFOR-65)
(RI) UIC: WD3EAA (U)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 13 DEC 1968

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AV GC-DH, AIC 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, AIC 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Subject report is forwarded.
2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report-Lessons Learned of the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery for the period ending 31 October 1968, as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



O. B. FORY
1LT, AGC
Asst AG

AVHGC-DST (6 Nov 68) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery
Period Ending 31 October 1968 (HCS-CSFOR-65) (R1) UIC: WD3EAA (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 23 DEC 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1968 from Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery and concurs with the report as modified by the preceding indorsements.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W. C. Arntz
W. C. ARNTZ
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ II FFORCEV
HQ 1st Bn 27th Arty

GPOP-DT (6 Nov 68) 5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 1st Bn, 27th Arty for Period Ending
31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

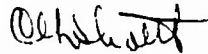
HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

30 DEC 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

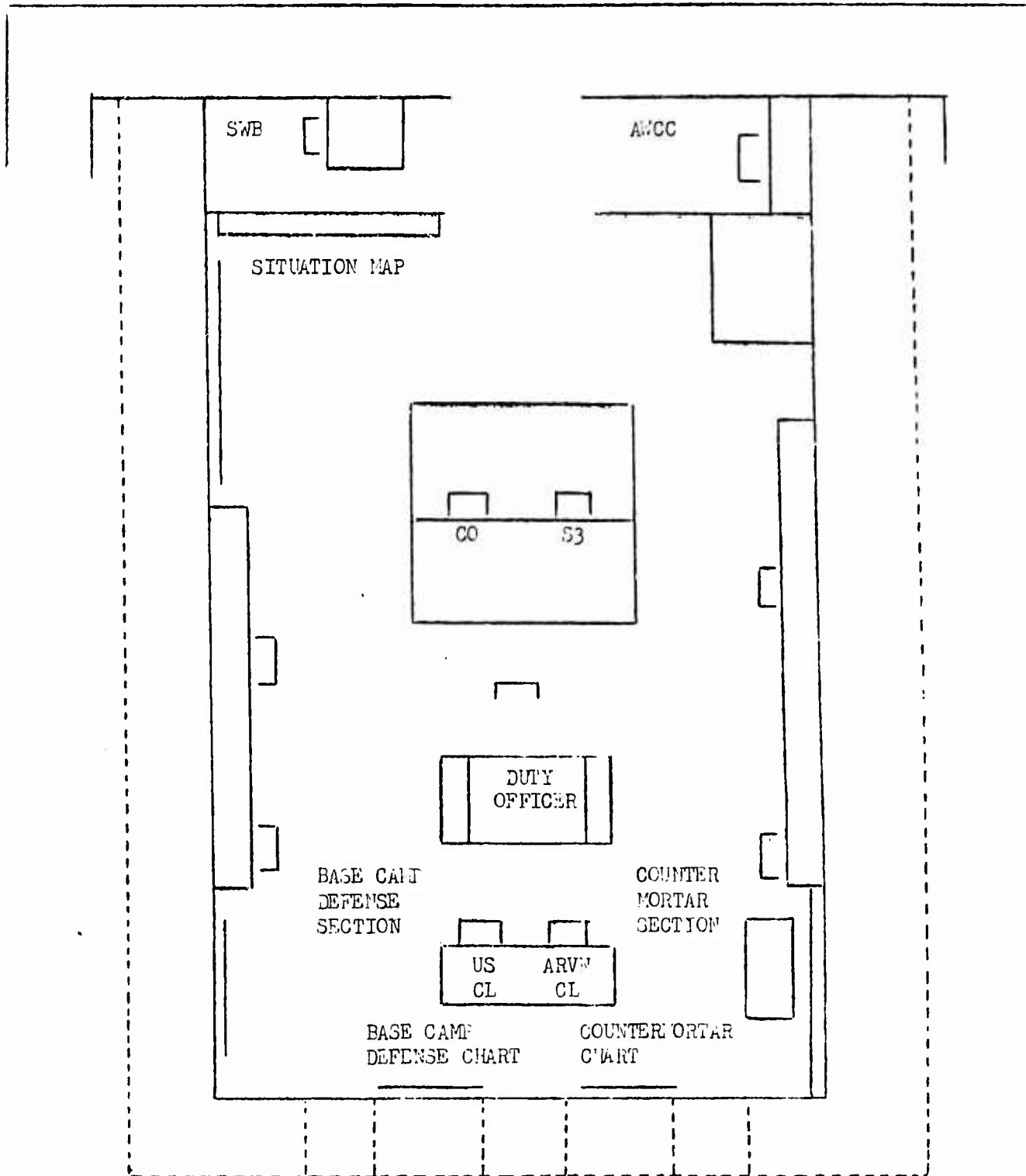
This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT,
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

BASE CAMP DEFENSE FSCC



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